A SERMON

Preached at

Christs Church

IN

DUBLIN,

Jan. 31 1669.

By EZEKIEL HOPKINS.

Published by Order.

DUBLIN, Printed by *Benjamin Tooke*, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, And are to be sold by *Mary Crooke* in *Castle-street*. 1671.

ERRATA.

Pag. 1 *lin.* 8 *read* Amercement.
Pag. 20 *lin.* 13 *read* these.
Pag. 25 *lin.* 1 *read* thy.
Ib. *lin.* 2 *for distinguish, read* disintangle.
Pag. 38 *lin.* 20 *read* spilt.

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1 PET. II. xiii, xiv.

Submit your ſelves to every Ordinance of man, for the Lords ſake. Whether it be to the King as ſupream; or unto Governours, as unto them who are ſent by him for the puniſhment of evil doers, and for the praiſe of thoſe that do well.

WEre nothing elſe required to a day of Humiliation, but the Solemnity of publick *ſorrow*, and a *ſad* review of former miſcarriages: if a Faſt did onely lay a tribute upon our eyes; and tears, were the whole amecement of our crimes; I my ſelf ſhould have judged the Text now read,

much improper to the occaſion; and ſhould rather have choſen ſome of thoſe paſſionate lamentations, that might have opened a fountain in every eye, to floud this place, and turn it into a *Bochim*. But becauſe the beſt ſorrow is amendment, and *Reformation* the trueſt Repentance, I therefore thought our moſt unfeigned mourning for a *ſlaughtred Monarch*, would be to learn, and practice our duty to the *living*.

I believe there are none of us here, but do from our very hearts deteſt, and execrate that horrid villany, which we this day bewaile; and account thoſe hands accurſed that were ſo impiouſly imbrewed in the Royal, and Sacred bloud of *their Soveraign*, and *Gods Anointed*. Let us therefore teſtifie our abhorrence of that bloudy crime by our preſent ſubmiſſion: and by our chearful obedience, if not *expiate the ſin*, and guilt; yet in ſome meaſure *redeem the credit*, *and glory* of theſe Nations.

I have therefore pitcht upon theſe words of the Apoſtle, *Submit your ſelves to every Ordinance of man, for the Lords ſake*, &c. And they are one of thoſe many rules, preſcribed in this latter part of the Chapter for the right ordering of a Chriſtian converſa-

tion,

tion, that it might be blameleſs, and inoffenſive.

For though it were both the primitive Principle and Practice, in all *lawfull things*, to yield ready obedience to the will and command of their Magiſtrates; and in all *unlawfull*, chearfully to devote themſelves to ſufferings: yet (as appears by their Apologies) they were clamoured againſt by the heathens, as heady, and ſeditious, authors and leaders of factions, diſturbers of the publick peace, and peſtilent enemies to the State. This accuſation was altogether undeſerved, and indeed incongruous both to their temper, and the rules of their Profeſſion. It was a very unlikely thing, that *they* ſhould aim at worldly greatneſs, whoſe firſt entrance into Chriſtianity was the renouncing of the world: that *they* ſhould imbroil the State in Rebellion againſt their Prince, who never liſt up their hands, but in prayers to God for him; that *they* ſhould intend to get the Soveraignty, and Dominion to themſelves, who never thought of any other Crown, but of martyrdom, and that which followed upon it, of Glory. They were not ſuch martial and fighting Chriſtians, as the

men of our times. And we may well wonder, if this Generation, who have been so hot, and fiery about little circumstances, and thought the debate of a Rite, or the mode of Discipline, cause enough, to warrant arms, and blood, and the ruins of Kingdoms; if they had lived in those primitive and Apostolical days, how they would have comported themselves under the Tyranny, and Cruelty of their heathen Emperours. Certainly, if onely a conceit and fancy of Superstition, could now leavy Armies, and draw out the sword against those, who were acknowledgedly of the same Doctrine, and Faith with themselves, who held the same *Profession*, the same *Baptism*, the same *Head*, the same *God*, and *Father of all*, and agreed in all the substantials of one, and the *same Religion*; we may well think they would have flown out into all the extremities of blood and violence, when no other choice lay before them, but either *Death*, or *Idolatry*. Those who could now think it *lawful* to depose and murder a *Christian King*, would, no doubt, have thought it *meritorious* to assassinate a *Pagan Persecutor*. The Church had been then *militant* in another sense, than it was: and

Christ

Christ might have had *many Hectors*, but *few Martyrs*. No; the mild and calm Spirit of the Gospel taught them otherwise. Flying, or dying were their onely refuges; and prayers, and tears their onely weapons. To read the histories of those first days of the Church, is but to wade so far in blood. Such multitudes perisht, of each sex, of all ages, by wild beasts, by fire, by the Cross, by the sword, by all the (*a*) witty cruelties, that rage could invent, or power execute, that it is a wonder there were Persecutors enough to destroy them; and a farr greater wonder that there were any left to succeed in the profession of the same faith. But it was here true, which one of them said, *Sanguis Martyrum est semen Ecclesiæ*; *The blood of Martyrs is the seed of the Church*: (*b*) whence sprung up such a numerous company of Confessors, as by their invincible patience, not by opposition, and resistance, wearied out their Tormenters, who had not strength enough to *inflict*, what the Christians had strength enough to *suffer*. Yea so *thick* was this *seed* sown, that (*c*) St. *Jerome* assignes no less than the blood of *five thousand* Martyrs, to every day in the year; onely excepting the

(a) *Quid sentis de carne cum supplicijs erogatur, enisa reddere Christo vicem moriendi pro ipso, & quidem per eandem crucem sæpe, nedum per atrociora quoque ingenia pœnarum.* Tertul de Resurrect.

(b) *Ligabantur, includebantur, cædebantur, torquebantur, urebantur, laniabantur, trucidabantur, & multiplicabantur*, Aug. de Civit. Dei lib. 22 cap. 6.

(c) Hieron. Epistol. ad *Chromatium & Heliodorum.*

the first of *January* from so deep a *Rubrick*: And that which I cannot but account the hardest and sorest tryal of their patience, was, that whensoever it pleased Almighty God to send any notable plague upon the world, as sickness, or drowth, or famine; whensoever the Sea, or Rivers broke out, or a worse deluge of Barbarous, and Savage Nations broke in, upon the Roman Confines, streight the out-cry of the Rabble was, *Christianos ad Leones*, *Away with the Christians to the Lyons*, as *Tertullian* witnesseth in his *Apologetick*: streight the anger of the Gods must be appeased with the bloud of Christians, who for refusing to *Sacrifice*, must themselves be made victimes.

Now, though it be a great provocation to *become* turbulent and seditious, when men are *causlesly* suspected, and punisht as such already: yet, saith our Apostle, though you are so dealt with, spoken against and Persecuted as evil doers, herein shew your selves to be Christians, that aim at greater matters than what your Emperours are jealous you will attempt to take from them; and be not onely *victorious in your Constancy* under *sufferings*, but *loyal* also *in your Obedience*,

dience, under *ſuſpicions*, and *falſe accuſations. Though they ſpeak againſt you as evil doers, as it is* verſ. 12. *Yet ſubmit your ſelves to every Ordinance of man for the Lords ſake.*

The words contain in them.

Firſt, An *Authoritative Command* of Obedience. *Submit your ſelves.* 1.

Secondly, The *Object* to which this Obedience muſt be yeilded. *Every Ordinance of man.* 2.

Thirdly, The *diviſion* of this Ordinance of man into *ſupreme*, *and ſubordinate. Submit to the King as ſupream*, *and to Governours ſent by him*, *as ſubordinate.* 3.

Fourthly, We have the *Duty* of all Governours, and the *end* of all Government expreſt; and that is, *The puniſhment of evil doers*, *and the praiſe of them that do well.* 4.

Fifthly, We have the *Motive* that inforceth this Exhortation and Command. *Submit to them for the Lords ſake.* 5.

There are but two Terms in the Text that require explication. The one is, what is meant by *every Ordinance of man.* The other, what force lyes in that adjuring expreſſion, *For the Lords ſake.*

As

As to the former; *Every Ordinance of man* may be taken, either.

First, For every *Edict and Constitution, every Law and Command* that issues forth from those that are in Authority over us. Called therefore an *Ordinance of man*, because invigorated by humane Authority. Or

Secondly, It may be taken for *Magistrates* themselves. And indeed thus it ought to be understood in this place. And so the sense is this: Whatsoever lawful form of Magistracy or Government you live under, *Submit* your selves unto it. And it is here called *an Ordinance of man*, κτίσει ἀνθρωπίνῃ, *an humane creature*, not as though Magistracy were onely an humane Invention, or a creature of mans making. For so St. *Peter* should contradict St. *Paul*, who tells us, *Rom.* 13. 1. *There are no powers but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God; and he that resisteth the power, resisteth the Ordinance of God.* But yet this *Ordinance of God*, is here called *an Ordinance of man*; both because it is appointed among men, and for the good of men: and because likewise the several forms of Government were at first modell'd according as humane prudence

dence and convenience dictated. *Magistracy* is an *Ordinance of God*, in respect of its *original Institution:* but it is an *Ordinance of man*, in respect of its *particular Constitution, and Modification.*

Then as for the *Motive*, *Submit your selves for the Lords sake*; This can bear no other sense, than upon the account of Gods Command, as you would do an acceptable service to him. And it is tantamount to that other place, *Rom.* 13. 5. *You must needs be subject, not onely for wrath*, i. e. for fear of the Princes wrath, and the direful effects that may follow upon it in case of disobedience; *but also for Conscience sake*: i.e. because of those obligations which lie upon Conscience from Gods commands. For nothing can be done for Conscience sake, which is not done out of respect to Gods Authority, who is the onely supream Lord of Conscience, and hath strictly bound it to all duties of submission to his under Officers, and Vicegerents upon earth. So that disobedience to the *Ordinance of man*, rests not there, but becomes Rebellion against God himself. Princes rule by vertue of Gods Commission and Authority; they are his Lieutenants in the world, and

therefore to disobey them, is to rebel against that Sovereign and Divine Authority by which they reign.

Hence therefore let us observe: *That Obedience to earthly Kings and Governours is a duty we owe to them, and not to them onely, but to the great King, and Governor of Heaven and Earth. Submit your selves for the Lords sake.*

Man was at first created after the image and similitude of God; and one great part of that Image consisted in his *Dominion* over the Creatures. But Kings in this particular approach much nearer unto the Divine resemblance, and have *fairer strokes* of this Image drawn upon them than other men. They are raised in power and Soveraignty, not onely over the *brute* and *irrational Creatures*, as others are; but over *men* themselves, and are *Lords of those*, who are *Lords of the world*. As *Adam* was therefore like unto God, because inferiour to none, but him; so are they. The Image of Divinity is so conspicuous in their Dominion and Soveraignty, that upon this very account alone, God takes them into co-partnership of that glorious name, whereby himself is known, *Psal.* 82. 6. *I have said*

ye are Gods. Whatsoever they be for other indowments; whether vertuous, or vicious; Persecuters, or Favourers of Religion; yet in respect of Soveraignty, and Dominion, they are the visible Images and lively pourtraicts of God upon Earth.

Now as a contumely, or dishonour done to the Image or statue of a man; redounds onely to the dishonour of the Person, whom it represents; (and therefore States, to punish those who are either dead, or fled out of their reach, have been oftentimes known publickly to execute their Pictures) so it is here; Disobedience to the lawfull Magistrate reflects contempt upon God himself, whose Image the Magistrate is: and by *despising Government, and speaking evil of Dignities*, they onely invent a way how they may rebell against, and depose God *in Effigie*.

But it is not my design to make a *Panegyrick* in magnifying Kingly power; but rather to give some Instructions, concerning that *submission* and *obedience* which we owe unto it upon the command of God. Never certainly was it more needful than now, rightly to state how farr, and upon what grounds we are obliged to obey the *Powers* that God

hath ſet over us. Which poſſibly we may gain ſome light to diſcern by a thorough ſifting of theſe following diſtinctions.

1. First we muſt diſtinguiſh of *Rulers*: For they are either *lawful Magiſtrates*, or *Uſurpers*. And bleſſed be God, that we may now without danger, make ſuch a diſtinction as this is.

2. Secondly, As *they*, ſo their *Commands* may be either *lawfull, or unlawfull*.

3. Thirdly, Obedience to their lawful commands may be conſidered as due, either in point of *Prudence*; or elſe in point of *Conſcience*.

4. Fourthly, Obedience in point of Conſcience, is either *Active*, in performing what is required; or *Paſſive* in ſuffering what is threatned.

Out of theſe *Diſtinctions*, I ſhall form ſeveral *Propoſitions*, reſolutory (as I hope) to my ſubject in hand.

1. First, Therefore, No ſubjection is due to an *unlawful and Uſurping Power*, upon *Gods Commaund*, and *for Conſcience ſake*. Some of late years who have been mighty loth *to diſpute Titles* againſt their preſent Intereſt and advantage, have earneſtly oppoſed this Aſſertion: affirming that *Uſurped*

Vsurped Power though it be *unlawful* in the *Acquisition*; yet becomes so farr *lawful* when *acquired*, as to oblige Conscience it self to submission. A strange and absurd opinion this; as if that became lawful by being *accomplisht*, which was wicked and sinful in being but *attempted*. Then must *prosperous* wickedness, hereafter be taken for vertue: and the onely way to *justifie* a bad undertaking must be to go *thorough with it*. No, It is not a *rude, boistrous Power*, that may perhaps be like an irresistible Torrent, and bear down all before it; it is not this, but *Right*, and *Title* that invests a *Magistrate*. Magistracy and Authority, is too *Sacred a thing* to be intaild upon the *longest sword*, and the *strongest arm*. And certainly if actual possession of Sovereignty can make good any *Vsurpers* Title unto it; and make him *the power ordained of God*, by the same reason may any plead Title to your houses and estates, who can either by force, or fraud make entry upon them.

But yet as absurd as this Doctrine is, *Scripture* is alledged for it: and of all, that place is especially insisted on, *Rom.* 13. 1.

13. 1. *There is no power but of God, the powers that be, are ordained of God.* Hence they collect, that the very *Being* or *Existence of a Power* makes it the *Ordinance of God*, and obligeth even *Conscience* it self to Obedience. But here, it is not the Apostles intent to assert, that the *Being* of a Power makes it lawful; but that those *lawful Powers that are*, are Gods Ordinance and appointment. And this appears

1. First, Because the word ἐξουσία which is here translated Power, is not any where used in the New Testament, but onely to signifie *Authority and a lawful Power*. Yea, when the *Devil* himself used it, *Luke* 4. 6. He would willingly have had our Saviour understood him in this sence. And not to insist on this, the very notation of it from the verb ἔξεστι, *Licet*, proves the onely proper use of it to be for *lawful Power*.

2. Secondly, This *Power* which the Text speaks of, is such as may *not be resisted*. *Whosoever resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receive unto themselves damnation*, *verse* 2. But now that Power which hath

no

no Title to Sovereignty, besides present Possession, may be *lawfully resisted*, without the sad doom of incurring damnation for so doing? What frequent instances have we in the Book of *Judges*, of the revolutions of the Israelites affairs? Often in the Possession, and under the oppression of their neighbouring Kings, till God raised them up deliverers to rescue them from that bondage, and slavery. They did not think they were for *Conscience*, or for *Gods sake*, bound to obey the usurping Powers they were at times under? No, though their Usurpers might plead, sometimes Twenty, sometimes Forty years prescription to strengthen their Title? Not to instance in all the particulars I might, (for that would be too tedious) what shall we think of *Jehoiada's* proceedings, not onely in *resisting*, but in *deposing*, *and putting Athaliah to death*? Clear it is, that she had the Sovereignty in Possession, and stood seized of it above six years. Yet none (I hope) will affirm, that *Jehoiada resisted Gods Ordinance*, or incurred *damnation*, by deposing her, and restoring his rightful Prince.

Again

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Since the onely Title that an *Usurper* hath to Soveraignty, is his *resisting*, and destroying the lawful power, it will follow, that a damnable act, as this is, may of it self confer a *lawful power*, if invasion, or possession alone can make it such, which is an opinion so wild, that sobriety, and reason abhorr it. 'Tis true indeed, many have been rightful Soveraigns, who ascended the Throne by flagitious Crimes, and the murder of their Predecessors: but yet the Title could never be devolved upon them by their wickedness, but either by Elective, or Hereditary succession. They have resisted, and destroyed the lawful Powers, onely to make way for their own Title to take place; but never can it be conceived, that Rebellion should give a Title; or that God should give a man such a form of Deputation, as doth at once *confirm* his *Authority*, and *Seal* his *damnation*. It is evident therefore that lawful Soveraignty is not founded upon actual possession, but a fixt and setled right; and consequently where ever an Usurping Power is advanc't, neither God, nor Conscience require submission to it.

And

And yet to give the contrary opinion ſome plauſible colour, it is here objected, that *thoſe very perſons* which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, and which the believing Romans ought not to reſiſt upon pain of Damnation, were but *Uſurpers*: the *Cæſars* intruding by force and violence, and the ruine of the Commonwealth, into the ſupream Authority.

To this may be anſwered, That not to diſpute their right in firſt *ſeiſing* of the *Roman Empire*, which poſſibly (as I think in moſt, if not all other Governments) might be unjuſt enough, yet it is certain, and as clear as Hiſtory can make any thing, that they were by the free votes both of *Senate* and *People*, and all the Authority of that *State* ſetled and acknowledged for their rightful Magiſtrates, and injoyed the Title and Power for ſome ſucceſſion of Emperours, before the Apoſtle wrote this Epiſtle. And therefore Obedience was due to them, upon the account of *Conſcience*, and *for Gods ſake*. But it no way follows, that becauſe the *Powers* that *then were*, were Gods Ordinance, that therefore *every Power* that is at any

time *existent*, must needs be so too. That's the first Position.

Secondly, Upon *prudential* and self-preserving Principles, Submission may sometimes be yielded to the *lawful commands* of an unlawful and usurping Power. *Lawful commands* I call them, not as though such had any right to command, but because they may command that which is right, and lawful to be done. Now though it be every mans duty, by all likely and probable means, to endeavour the suppression of an usurping Power; yet *Prudence*, and that Soveraign Law of *self preservation* must dictate to him the way and manner how it may be accomplisht, which till it be found *feasible*, it is but precipitateness for any man to oppose himself *naked* and *defenceless* against *armed* violence. This rashness doth but *throw away* a life, which if preserved till fairer opportunity presents it self, might become greatly serviceable to the rightful Prince, and instead of deposing, doth but *secure* the Usurper, alarming him against the future attempts of others, to which *Confidence, and security* might else expose him. And therefore *Jehojada* did not declare

declare againſt *Athaliah* till he had ingaged the Officers of the Army, and layd his combination ſo, as reaſon might vote it would prove ſucceſsful. But enough, and too much already of *Uſurped Powers*, Therefore

Thirdly, We ought to obey the commands of the lawful Magiſtrate in thoſe things which are in themſelves *neceſſary* to be done, and our *indiſpenſable duty*; and that not only out of *Conſcience to God*, but alſo out of *Conſcience to him*. Such are all the duties of the law, of nature, and of the written law of God, which the Magiſtrate ought to inforce upon us by his Authority: for he is *Cuſtos utriuſq; tabulæ*, *the Guardian of both Tables of the Law*. And though the duties therein preſcribed, do before hand bind the Conſcience to the practice of them; yet alſo is the guilt of tranſgreſſing them, aggravated by the addition of the Magiſtrates commands: and it is no contemptible ſecurity added to the Laws of God, when they have a *Guard* of humane Laws ſet about them; and none can violate the Laws of God, but he he muſt alſo wrong and violate the 3.

Authority of his Prince. As for Instance, we ought to *worship God* after a right and due manner; we ought to *honour our Parents*, *to abstain from theft*, *murder*, *and adultery*, though there were no humane Laws to require it from us. But yet when the Magistrate shall interpose *his Authority*, and injoyn the very same; these duties lye then more *pressing* and *binding* upon our Consciences. For then the strength of divers Commands is put together *into one*; and we are *doubly* obliged to their duties, both by *these Laws* of God which expresly require them; and also by *another Law* of God, which requires *Obedience* to our *Magistrates*. Of this I think, there is no doubt at all made, and therefore.

Fourthly, If the thing commanded be *indifferently lawful*, and *appear so to us*; that is, if it be in its own nature such as we may either do it, or not do it without sin; then are we to be determined by the Magistrates Commands to do what he requires, and to abstain from what he forbids. For though after the Magistrate hath interposed his Authority, the thing remains in it self still *indifferent*, yet

yet it no longer remains *ſo*, as to our practice; but it is a ſin in us, not to do what lawfully we may when he requires it. For I ſuppoſe a Magiſtrate hath a greater Command over his Subjects, than any Father hath over his children; ſince the Magiſtrate is the *Common Father*, *Pater Patriæ*, and Children are bound to obey him, rather than their Parents, when their Commands contradict one the other. Now which of you doth not aſſume to himſelf ſuch an authority over his Child, as to think him bound in duty, to do that upon your Command, which before you commanded him, was meerly indifferent, and might either be done by him, or not done. The ſame obedience therefore which you expect from yonr children in things indifferent, the ſame you owe to your Prince, and the Authority that is over you.

And therefore it is a moſt *abſurd* opinion, which ſome have taken up, that things in themſelves *indifferent*, become *unlawful* when *impoſed*. As if that were *unlawful* to be done when *commanded*, which was *lawful* to be done, even *without a command*: or any thing could be lawful, when

when onely *permitted*; but sinful, when *injoyned*.

And as it is hugely *absurd* and *irrational*, so it is very *dangerous* and *pernicious*: For it cuts the very sinews, and plucks up the very roots of Government. It cashiers and abrogates the farr greater part of all humane *Laws*; and abridgeth the Magistrates Authority, in injoyning any thing, but expres duties, commanded before of God in Scripture.

And see what a *wild consequence* will follow upon this *Tenent*: For if things *indifferently lawful*, become *sinful* when *imposed*, then by the same reason they must needs become *necessary*, when they are *forbidden*. And so consequently, whatsoever of this nature the Magistrate shall forbid, men must look upon themselves as bound in Conscience to practice: and what *Monsters* lye in the womb of this consequence, any understanding man may at first glance perceive. What is this, but to spell the Magistrates Authority *backwards*; and to give him that power over your Consciences by his *Prohibitions*, which you deny to his *Commands* and *Injunctions*? This *Tenent* therefore is most *ridiculous*

lous; most *foolish*, and most *pernicious*.

We ought then in all things, which are in themselves *indifferent*, and *appear so to us*, to give ready and chearful obedience to the Commands of our lawful Magistrates; and that *for the Lords sake*. And here they are not little *prejudices*, nor little *inconveniencies*; because such a Command crosseth my *former custome*, or my *present humour*, that can supersede my obligation. No, nor is it lawful, without very great and pressing reasons, and almost a necessity, to chuse the *passive part* of the Command, to undergo the *Penalty*, rather than fulfill the *Precept*. And that because the Penalty is onely annexed, as the *secondary will* of the Magistrates, to inforce the Precept; nor doth the Law primarily aim at *punishment*, but at *conformity* to it. This is to be accounted the *will* of the Magistrate, whose *will* is our *Obligation* in all things that are lawful and indifferent. And therefore to chuse the *Penal*, before the *Preceptive* part of Obedience, without very weighty, and necessitating reasons urging us thereunto, cannot altogether be excused from *Disobedience*; be-

cause

cauſe it comes not up to that Conformity which the Magiſtrate principally intends. That's the fourth Poſition.

5. Fifthly, If the thing be indifferently lawful in it ſelf; but appears *doubtful* unto us, and we cannot reſolve our ſelves whether it be lawful, or evil; I think we are obliged (till we receive clearer light, and information) to make *that part* of the doubt, which the Magiſtrate commands us, as being the ſafeſt, and moſt ſatisfactory to Conſcience. And my reaſon is this; Becauſe the Obligation that lies upon us to *obey* the Magiſtrates Commands, is *certain*; but the *unlawfulneſs* of what thou *doubteſt* is *not ſo:* and therefore his Authority ought to preponderate with us, and make that our *undoubted duty*, which was before, but a *doubted and ſuſpected ſin.*

Indeed the *Apoſtle* tells us, *Rom.* 14. 23. *That whatſoever is not of Faith, i. e.* whatſoever is not done, or forborn with a rational perſwaſion of the lawfulneſs of doing or forbearing it, *is ſin:* and that *whoſoever doubteth is damned if he eat.* But in this caſe, the Magiſtrates Commands do not ingage thee to do any thing

thing *doubting*, but rather will solve thy *doubts*, and distinguish thee from the snare in which thy Conscience was held. For though the nature of the thing be not at all *changed* by his Commands, yet thy doubtful mind may be well *setled*: for *upon his Command*, thou hast reason to think that thy *duty*, which *before his Command* thou couldst not absolutely conclude to be a *sin*. That's a fifth Position. distinguish

Sixthly, If the thing injoyned be in it self *sinful and unlawful*, or at least *appear so* unto us, then take these two following Rules. 6.

First we ought not upon any pretences, or inducements whatsoever, to yield *Active obedience* to such a Command. In this case that rule of the Apostle holds good, and will do so ever, *Acts*. 5. 29. *We ought to obey God rather then men.* And *Acts*. 4. 19. *Wether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.* And in this case it was no *rude*, nor *uncivil*, but a *noble* and truly *Heroick* answer which the *three Worthies* gave unto *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan*. 3. 18. *Be it known unto thee O King, that we will not serve thy Gods, nor worship thy golden* 1.

Image, which thou hast set up. For when Princes commands contradict the commands of God, they carry no Authority in them to inforce our *Active obedience*; no more than the Commands of an *inferiour Magistrate* do, when they contradict the Laws of the *supream*.

Yea we are not to yield *Active obedience*, not onely when their commands *are* expresly against the commands of God; but when we are verily in our own Consciences *so perswaded*. For Conscience rules us in Gods name, and whatsoever it *Dictates*, it believes to be the very will and mind of God. And therefore to slight the voice of Conscience, is interpretatively to slight the voice of God. And those who will not follow the voice of Conscience, when *they believe* its dictates to be the will of God, would not follow them, though indeed *they were so*.

But then we must be sure that we have expres word and warrant from God, and not take up with doubtful and obscure Texts, and more doubtful and remote consequences to dispense with us from that obedience, which is evidently and frequently required. But

Secondly,

Secondly, Though we may not yield *Active obedience* to the unlawful commands of our Superiours, yet we are bound to yield *Passive obedience* to them. For all humane Laws consist of a *Precept*, and a *penalty*; where the *Precept* may not be *obeyed*, yet the *Penalty* must be *submitted to*, with all patience and quietness, though it reach to the loss of our Estates, or of our liberty, yea the dearest of all our possessions, life it self; unless we can prudently withdraw our selves, and avoid their rage by flight. That's the *sixth Position*. 2.

Seventhly, and lastly, we ought in no case whatsoever to *resist*, and *rebell against* the lawful Powers that God hath set over us; yea though they should use their power *unlawfully*. *For whosoever resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God. And they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation.* As it is in the Government of a State or Nation, if any *inferiour Magistrate* abuse his power over thee, thou art not presently to oppose him by any violent or illegal proceedings, nor to make any insurrection against him, and pull him off his Tribunal, or divest him of his Authority; but appeal to the *Prince and supream* 7. 1.

prime Magistrate; for redress of those wrongs: so likewise here, if the *supream Magistrate* should abuse his Soveraign Power, and command thee to do what God, his superiour, hath commanded thee not to do, and shall punish thee for not obeying him, and offending God; thou art not to *resist*, nor make conspiracies against him, nor to raise tumults and seditions to depose him from his Authority; but onely quietly and meekly to *appeal* unto God, who alone is his *Judge* and *Ruler*, and to beg him to take thy cause into his cognizance, and redress thy wrongs and injuries.

Yea put the case as high as we can; suppose that Christian Subjects should live under the Dominion of a Prince, who, as he is a *God* in respect of *Power*, so he is a *Devil* in respect of *Cruelty*, and *mischief*. Suppose the two worst cases that can befall them.

1. First, That he should injoyn them *superstition and Idolatry*.

2. Secondly, That he should oppress them by *Persecution and Tyranny*.

As ever there were a specious pretence for Subjects to say, *shall I smite him, shall*

Insmite him, it is in this supposition. Here seems the best cause and the highest equity in the world, to deliver the *world* from a *Monster*, and the *Church* from a *Devil*. Yet I say, neither of these can justifie *Rebellion* against him, or *Revenge* upon him. Was there ever a more accomplisht and consummate wretch than *Nero*? A man that made the *Martyrdom* of Christians his *pastime*, (a) and burnt them in the streets of *Rome* to light him from the stewes. And yet St. *Paul* commands the Roman Christians to submit *to him for Conscience sake*, and threatens them with *Damnation* if they *resist*. No, we ought in this case (though it be farr from the fiery spirit of our times) to *receive blows*, but not to *strike again*, and rather to indure the greatest of Cruelties, then lift up our hands to revenge them.

(a) *Pereuntibus (Christianis) ludibria addita, ut ferarum tergis contecti, laniatu canum interirent, aut crucibus affixi aut flammandi; atq; ubi defecisset dies, in usumnocturni luminis urerentur. Tacit. Annal. lib. 15.*

And indeed there is a great deal of Reason for it. For

First, *Punishment* is an Act of *vengeance*. Now Revenge is such a wild untamed thing, that God hath not trusted it in any private hands, but reserved it to himself, who can best dispense and govern it. *Vengeance is mine, saith the*

Lord, and I will repay it. Rom. 12. 19. So that none ought to intermeddle with this part of Juſtice, but thoſe whom God hath impower'd thereunto, and made his Subſtitute officers, and Miniſters to diſpenſe it, and that is only the Magiſtrate. *Rom.* 13. 4. *He is the Miniſter of God, a Revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil.* None are to be *Revengers*, but *God*, and *Magiſtrates*. Magiſtrates upon *evil men*: and God upon *evil Magiſtrates*. Private Chriſtians have nothing to do with *Revenge*, or puniſhment; no, not to inflict it one upon another; much leſs upon their *Rulers*: and if they do; as they *Rebel* againſt *men*, ſo they *uſurp* upon God, and put themſelves in his ſtead.

2. Secondly, Princes are *ſupream* to all, but God; and therefore *accountable* to none beſides him. All humane power is *ſubordinate* to theirs, and *derived* from it: for from the *chief*, do *other* Magiſtrates receive their Authority, and Commiſſion; and therefore cannot any humane Power puniſh thoſe, on whoſe Authority they depend.

3. Thirdly, What a wide gap for all manner

ner of *confusion*, and *disorder*, would this open to the world? who, that fancies himself aggrieved and wrong'd, would not presently make a party, and sound the Trumpet, and proclaim that he had equity, and justice on his side, and so hurl all into *Tumults* and wild *confusion*? But though thou maist have suffered real injustice; yet thou oughtest not to rebel. The wiseman hath long since condemned the *striking of Princes for equity*, Prov. 17. 26. Whether for *their equities* sake, or *thine*. And the Apostle reckons it the *glory* of a Christian, and an acceptable *service* to God patiently to indure when we *suffer evil* for *doing well*. 1 *Pet.* 2. 19, 20, 21. *What glory is it if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently; this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because also Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.*

Yea even *Religion*, the best and most precious of all our enjoyments, is too weak a cause to justifie Rebellion, and insurrections. To think that upon the ac-

account of *Religion*, or any form, or mode either of worſhip, or Diſcipline, that men are zealous for, they may lawfuly oppoſe, yea and depoſe the Authority that God hath ſet over them, is a Tenent utterly *irreligious*. And truly Religion can never ſo much ſuffer by the fierceſt *Perſecution*, as by ſuch wild and rebellious *Principles*. It is a Doctrine quite contrary to the true *Genius* and *Conſtitution* of Chriſtianity. In the primitive times, for the long ſpace of three *hundred years*, till at length the *Roman Emperours* gave up their names to *Chriſt*, thoſe who commanded the whole world, ſet all their wit and force to *cruſh* this *growing Doctrine*; but were ſtill diſappointed in this attempt, whence this defeat? was it becauſe they were overborn by the too powerful *reſiſtance* that the Chriſtians made againſt them? Nothing leſs (*a*) For though almoſt every City, every Village, every Family; yea their Camps, and Armies abounded with Chriſtians, as *Tertullian* witneſſeth in his *Apologetick*; yet under all thoſe ſavage

(*a*) *Si enim hoſtes aperios, non tantum vindicesocc l-tos agere vellemus, deeſſet nobis vis numerorum & copiarum?*

Plures nimirum. Mauri & Marcomanni, ipſiq; Parthi, vel quantacunq; unius tamen loci, & ſuorum finium gentes, quam totius orbis? Externi ſumus, & veſtra omnia implevimus, urbes, inſulas, caſtella, municipia, conciliabula, caſtra ipſa, tribus, decurias, palatium, ſenatum, forum; ſola vobis reliquimus Templa. Cui bello non idonei, non prompti fuiſſemus, etiam copiis impares, qui tam libenter trucidamur, ſi non apud iſtam diſciplinam, magis occidi liceret quam occidere? Tertul. Apol.

and

and barbarous persecutions, that butcher'd them up *like sheep appointed to the slaughter*, we never read of any *insurrection* against the lawful Magistrate. (*b*) Nay the *Fathers* boast and glory of this *conquering patience* of the Christians, and *challenge* the Heathen to produce any one instance of a *mutiny* or *sedition*, wherein a Christian was ingaged. (*c*) Notwithstanding their vast *numbers*, that might make them *potent*; notwithstanding they were all *devoted to ruine and destruction*, which might make them *desperate*, and *despair* added to *power* makes it *invincible*; yet we read of no tumults, no uproars, no warrs raised by them in the State; for the Peace and Prosperity of which they prayed *dying*; and took the sword, rather into their *throats*, than into their *hands*: nor was it their method to propagate Christianity, and true Religion, by any other *bloud*, but their *own*. This was the way, by which the *Primitive Church* thrived, which *sent* more Christians to *Heaven*,

(*b*) *Circa Majestatem Imperatoris infamamur; tamen nunquam Albiniani, vel Nigriani, vel Cassiani, intemitij potuerunt Christiani. Tertul. ad scapulam, Dad. Cassij, & Nigri, & Albini? unde qui inter duas tauros obsident Cæsarem? Unde qui faucibus ejus exprimendis palæstricam exercent? De Romanis, ni fallor, id est, de non Christianis. Tert. Apol. vid. Aug. de civ. Dei. l. 22. c. 6.*

(*c*) *Non nos adversum te Imperator, armavit ipsa, quæ fortissima est in periculis desperatio. Tenemus ecce arma, & non resistimus, quia mihi magis, quam vincere volumus, & innocentes interire, quam noxij vivere præoptamus. Exuperius legionis Thebæa signifer, ad Maximinian.*

ven, and *gained* more to be Christians on *Earth*, than ever the *pomp*, and *splendour* of it hath done since.

This was the true Evangelical Spirit, which taught them to *obey* their Magistrates Commands, in what was *lawful*, and in what was *otherwise*, either *prudently* to *avoid* their rage by *flight*, or *patiently* to *indure* it by *dying*. They had not learn't that Lirry, that the Saints are the onely Lords of the world; that all the *ungodly* (and all *must* be *such*, whom they pleased) were but *Usurpers* and *Intruders* upon *their Rights*: That they must *Overturn*, *Overturn*, *Overturn*, to make way for the *Kingdom* of *Christ*; intending, no doubt, to set themselves, one at *his right hand*, and another at *his left*, in that *his Kingdom*. The Doctrine of the Gospel taught them not these violent and rebellious Principles; but it is as full of *Peace* as it is of *Purity*; and instructed them to *acknowledg* their Magistrates *Authority*, to *pray* for their *Prosperity*, to *obey* their commands *chearfully*, or *quietly* to *suffer* punishment: And this though they had abundant *Provocation to resist*, and *Probability* of being *successful*.

Much more *damnable*, therefore is it, when there is no such *provocation* given; when *Religion*, and *Piety*, and *Justice*, are onely *pretended*, when *Godly Princes* discharge their Conscience, and their Christian duty in the Government committed unto them; much more *damnable* is it, I say, yea *damnable* to the utmost degree of *damnation*, for Subjects upon every whimsical discontent, to rebell, imprison, depose, and murder them; while they cheat and dosen the world with the pretences of *Saints*, but do the works of Devils.

And now had this Doctrine been more preſt, and more pondered of late years, we had not *this day* had this sad occasion to be humbled for the unparalled wickedness of *Yesterday*. A day it was, that were it not it afforded us an opportunity to testifie our abhorrency and detestation of that bloudy villany it once saw, we might well wish that the year would *skip* it over; and imprecate it as *Job* doth the day of his birth, Job. 3. 3. 4. *Let that day perish, let it be darkness, let not God regard it, neither let the light shine upon it; let darkness, and the shadow of*

death stain it, and a perpetual cloud dwell upon it. A day that hath brought an *indelible blot and infamy* upon these *Nations*, and made us a *reproach and scorn* to the whole world. And what is worse, it hath exposed *Religion* it self to *contempt and hatred*, and made it a *reproach to serve God*, whilest they saw those very men that so highly pretended *Reformation, and the Power of Godliness*, imbrue their hands in *Royal and Sacred blood*, have been ready to conclude, that to profess *Religion*, is nothing else but to seek a *varnish and colour* for some black and horrid wickedness. This hath rendered the *Reverend* name of *Godliness*, despicable and odious to *profane Spirits*; who whilest they saw none *priviledged* to act their *rapines, revenge, injustice, and most wrongful Usurpation and Tyranny*, but those whose *mouths* were as full of a *glorious Profession*, as their *hands* were of *wicked deeds*, have charged all those impieties upon the score of *Religion*, and made it bear the burthen of those *Crimes* with which it is not *consistent*.

It was once the glory of the *Protestant Religion*, that it taught *Subjects* to account

account the *persons* of their Princes *Sacred* and *Inviolable*; *supream* to all under God, and accountable to none but Him: and possibly this one *Doctrine* hath been no small advantage, to make it gain *so much* ground, in *so short* a space. But now our Adversaries triumph in the shame of our Profession, when the most *notorious Regicides*, who not not onely *avow the Doctrine* but *publickly perpetrate the fact* of deposing and killing *a King*, are found among those who pretended to be at the greatest distance from *Romish Principles and practises*. There is indeed a great difference between the Doctrine of a *schism*; and the Doctrine of a *Church*: between the practice of a *Nation*, and the practice of a prevalent *Faction* in the Nation. And blessed be God, we have this still left to silence the recriminations of all Antichristian Adversaries, that to *depose* and *assassinate Kings*, is not the Doctrine of the *Protestant Church*, but of the *Romish Synagogue*. And as it was not the Doctrine of the *Church*, but of a *schism*; so neither was it the *Fact* of the *Nation*, but of a Rebellious and prevailing *Faction* in it; nor could their armed

violence

violence reach the *Head*, till they had first destroyed the *body* both of *Church* and *State*.

But it is not the work of this day to *excuse any*, but to *stirr up all* to bemoan this bloudy, and horrid Crime. A Crime the most horrid and accursed, that ever was acted under the *Sun*, but onely when a *Miracle* eclipst it from looking on. Though the Histories of all Nations abound with the sad *Tragedies* of their lawful Princes assassinated by their Subjects, yet we may still remarke, that their wickedness was either so *Timorous*, or so *Modest*, as to indeavour to *hide* the bloud they *shed*, and durst not be otherwise *guilty*, but with those advantages of night and secrecy, that might make them appear *Innocent*. But here Royal and Sacred bloud is *Theatrically* split; and the *Fact avowed* by the impudent *Pomp* and *Solemnity* of vilany. Vilany so profligate that it scorn'd to proceed in a *clandestine* manner, but as it was resolved to *out-do* all the examples of former Regicides, so to *out-face* all that should dare to oppose or condemn it. And therefore to add *Ceremony*, and *scorn* to *Murder*, they erect

Spilt

a *Pageantry* of Justice; summon the *Throne* to appear before the *Bar*; arraign *Majesty*; before which awe and reverence should have made them tremble, condemn *him* for their *own Crimes*; and execute that wicked Sentence with all the *Ostentation* that *triumphant* spight and malice could invent.

And that which makes all this the more odious, and execrable, all this was translated under *forms of Justice*, and *specious pretexts of the Glory of God*, and the Interests of Religion. Here the *Faith* bleeds bleeds together with the *Defender* of it: Religion it self suffers by the vile hypocrisie of those who pretended to an higher strain of godliness in practice, and reformation in Discipline, than yet the world had ever known. And it is likely to suffer an eternal reproach, as long as there are any *Popish* blasphemers, to cast it into the teeth of *Protestants*, that they never thought their Religion *pure enough*, till it was *washt in the blood* of a *Christian King*, of the same profession with themselves. O prodigy of wickedness! That ever *Justice* should be pretended to the committing of a Crime so full of dread

and

and horrour, that it might well puzzle and *nonplus Justice*, how to *punish* it, and *mercy* how to *forgive* it. That ever the increase of true Piety, and the advancement of the honour of Religion should be made a colour to the shedding the *blood of a King*, a *Fact* that gave *Religion* the most *mortal wound* that ever it received, since it was first planted in the world by *the blood of our Saviour*. And yet those Sacred Names, *The purity of Worship*, *The reformation of Abuses*, *The honour and glory of God*, *Law*, *and Justice*, *and the due Liberty of the subject*, must be made a *Stale* by those men (who could not else have successfully acted such a *deviliſh* part, unless they appeared like *Angels of Light*) to promote an impiety whose direct design, and natural consequence was to *overthrow*, and *root them all out*: and when they had cast out and slaughtred, not onely their *Brethren*, but their *common Father*, set up their cry with those hypocrites in *Isaiah*, *Now the Lord be glorified*.

Isa. 66. 5

And as this Fact was *in it self* most *impious*, so it was most *fatal* in all its *Train of consequents*. Nothing but *ruins and miſchiefs*,

chiefs, extortion, distraction, sacriledg, injustice, the blood of many, and the tears of all, personal, domestick, and publick evils, rents and divisions at home, scorn and contempt abroad, have almost ever since followed one upon the neck of another: and would to God they were so little felt and known, as to need recounting. Nor indeed, was it fit, that so horrid a Crime should have any better *Attendants*. And truly how could it be otherwise, where *Oppression* and *Violence* were the onely *legislative power*, where *Anarchy* and *Tyranny*, the two *Extremes* of Government, were alwayes striving for the upper hand? Where our *lives*, *liberties* and *estates* depended onely upon the *vote of the sword*? Our *Law*, the common fence and security of the Nation, and every mans best and richest Patrimony, were themselves *outlawed* by the private Interests of a few ambitious unsatisfactorious contents. Our Church rent in pieces by *schisms*, *errours*, *heresies*, *damnable Doctrines of Devils*, not onely *publickly broach'd*, but *publickly patronized too*.

And yet some *easie minds* are ready to think those times happy, because of the

Liberty, or rather indeed the *licenciousness of Religion*. But was Religion indeed in so good a plight, when in a *Juncto* the necessity, and usefulness of the *Ministry* was put to the Question? when *learning*, *Religion*, and the holy and precious *Ordinances of God*, depended upon the *rotten breath* of a Company of men of *rotten and corrupt minds*, whose *gain was their Godliness*, and had nothing *holy* belonging to them, but what they got by *Sacriledge*? Was Religion in so good a plight, when we daily feared an *Interdict* upon our publick Assemblies? When the *Solemn Worship* of God was *interrupted* and *affronted* by every one that had but *Impudence* and *Enthusiasme* enough to do it? Nay indeed Religion was vanish't into *vanting Phrases*, into an empty and notional profession; and that very Profession dwindled away into innumerable *Sects*, and *Schisms*, *Errours*, and *Heresies*; that certainly none can think it was in a *Prosperous* condition, but those who think Religion then prospers when it is not *much*, but *manifold*. These that *tolerated* every *Sect*, every *opinion*, and *Religion* seemed so to carry themselves, as if within a while they

would have *excepted the true.* For certainly, when once men in Power can *allow* of *false Doctrines*, the next step is *to imbrace them*, the next *to impose them.* Yea the *ficklenes's* and *instability* of our *Usurped Governments*, which might give us hope of relief, proved onely the *frequent renewing* of our misery, one power still succeeding another in the same design; all seeking to *advance themselves* upon the *ruines of the publick.* I remember an *Apologue* of an ulcerated man, who, when his friends would have driven away a swarm of flyes, that had been long sucking his sores; let them alone, saith he, these are pretty well *sated*, but if you drive them away, *fresh ones* will come, with *fresh appetites*, and more torment me. So truly it fared with us in our *tosses and change* of Governments. When one *swarm* of our Governours had their greedines's, & avarice some what glutted, then were we consigned over unto another, who *eat* the very *flesh* of these Nations, and *drank their tears and blood.* Yea and what was both the *reproach*, and *aggravation* of our misery, those *flyes* were but the off spring of *dirt and dung-*

hills. Our *plague* was like that of *Egypt*, the very *dust of the Earth* was *lice upon us*: The *meanest* of the people were our *Rulers*, and out of those *brambles* proceeded fire, that consumed the *Cedars of Lebanon*. And according to the *Pedigree* of our *Princes*, such were our *Priests* and *Leaders*. If any could but *prate nonsense*, and *prove it by Blasphemy*, this was a sufficient *Consecration* into the *Office*. This was enough to make him a most admired *light*, who indeed was but an *Ignis fatuus*, leading the silly and deluded rout, through the bogs and precipices of *Error*, and *Heresy*, into *perdition*.

This was the posture both of *Church* and *State* in those blessed times of *Religion*, and *Liberty*, which they so much boast of, and which were so highly advanced by those mens zealous indeavours, that they were grown quite *out of reach*, and almost *out of sight*; and had not God by a Miracle of Divine mercy interposed, within a while we should neither have had the face, nor the name of *Religion*, or *Liberty* left amongst us. But he infatuated their Counsells, and defeated their designs; and when their was no visible

power to break them, he dash't them in pieces one against the other, till they mutually broake themselves. *So let all thine Enemies perish O Lord; but let the King rejoyce in God, and joy in thy strength; through the mercy of the most high, let him never be moved.*

Now although it hath pleased Almighty God to break that yoake from off our necks, and to set us free from that oppression and violence, yet we ought not onely to detest, but bemoan, the outrages and wickednesses that were then committed, and seek to God, that he would avert from us those Plagues and judgments, which the guilt, of a *Part*, may deservedly bring upon these *whole* Nations. For this is the unhapiness of being link't, though not in *conspiracy*, yet in *National Society* with evil doers; that although we first suffer *from* their sins, yet we may afterwards suffer *for* them. When but one *Achan* had sinn'd, and that not so heinously, as to make him either a Murderer, or a Regicide; God punisheth the whole Camp of *Israel* for it, and causeth them to flee, and fall before their Enemies. Joshua 7. 11. *Israel*

el *hath sinned, for they have taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen and dissembled.* It was but the fact of one *Private man*, and yet God chargeth it upon the whole people, *Israel hath sinned, and they have taken.* Such a malignant influence hath the very *community* with wicked men, though we have no *communion* with their wickedness, to diffuse guilt and judgments upon a whole Nation. Believe it, *Blood* is a *loud* and crying sin. The *first* that was ever spilt, was heard as farr as from *Earth*, to Heaven. *Gen.* 4. 10. *The voice of thy Brothers blood cryeth to me from the ground.* And *Revel.* 6. 10. *The soules under the Altar cry with a loud voice, how long O Lord holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them which dwell on the Earth.* And if the blood of *private persons* be so audible in Gods eares, how much more loud and vocal, is the blood of a slaughtered *Monarch*! Especially, when the blood, and oppression, and ruines of so many thousands as were involved in the direful consequences of that fatal day, *joyn* their voices with it, *assault* heaven, and *cry aloud* for vengeance. Let us then *cry mightily* to

God,

God, that the *voice* of our *Prayers*, may be *louder* in his Eares, than the *voice* of our *provocations*: and let us by our *Tears* wash away that foule stain that lyes upon our profession; and beg of God, that he would powre out a plentiful effusion of the *blood of Christ*, to cleanse these Nations from the guilt of *blood*: for nothing less than the *blood of God*, which could *expiate* even for the shedding of *it self*, can *expiate* for shedding the *blood* of a *King*.

FINIS.

God, that the cries of our Prayers may be louder in his Ears, than the voice of our provocations: and let us by our Tears wash away that foule stain that lyes upon our profession; and beg of God, that he would powre out a plentiful effusion of the blood of Christ, to cleanse these Nations from the guilt of blood: for nothing less than the [illegible] which could expiate even for [illegible] of it self, can expiate for the [illegible] the blood of a King.

FINIS.